

Appl. No. 10/700,775
Atty. Docket No. 9418
Amdt. dated 28 April, 2006
Reply to Office Action of October 19, 2005
Customer No. 27752

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A tampon comprising a longitudinal centerline and a cross-sectional area defined[. . .] orthogonal to said centerline and a mass of absorbent material formed into a self-sustaining shape, said self-sustaining tampon comprising:

- a.) an insertion end region comprising an insertion end fiber density;
- b.) a withdrawal end region ~~opposite said insertion end region~~, wherein said withdrawal end region comprises a withdrawal end region fiber density; and
- c.) a center region intermediate said insertion end region and said withdrawal end region, wherein said center region comprises a center region fiber density;

wherein said self-sustaining shape has an outer surface which is substantially serpentine; and wherein said withdrawal end region fiber density is greater than said center region fiber density.

Claim 2. (Original) The tampon according to Claim 1 wherein said insertion end region is tapered and said withdrawal end region is flared.

Claim 3. (Original) The tampon according to Claim 1 wherein said insertion end region is flared and said withdrawal end region is tapered.

Claim 4. (Original) The tampon according to Claim 1 wherein said insertion end region is tapered and said withdrawal end region is tapered.

Claim 5. (Original) The tampon according to Claim 1 wherein said insertion end region is tapered and flared and said withdrawal end region is tapered and flared.

Claim 6. (Original) The tampon according to Claim 1 wherein said withdrawal end is asymmetric about said longitudinal centerline of said tampon.

Claim 7. (Original) The tampon according to Claim 1 wherein said insertion end fiber density and said withdrawal region fiber density are about equal.

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- Claim 8. (Currently Amended) The tampon according to Claim 1 wherein said withdrawal end region fiber density is from about 105% to about 160% of said center region fiber density.
- Claim 9. (Original) The tampon according to Claim 1 wherein said insertion end has a maximum perimeter region and a maximum perimeter region average fiber density, and wherein said center region has a minimum perimeter region and a minimum perimeter region average fiber density;
wherein said maximum perimeter region average fiber density is greater than said minimum perimeter region average fiber density.
- Claim 10. (Currently Amended) The tampon according to Claim [[8]] 9 wherein said maximum perimeter region average fiber density located in said insertion end region is from about 105% to about 150% of said minimum perimeter region average fiber density located in said center region.
- Claim 11. (Currently Amended) The tampon according to Claim [[8]] 9 wherein said maximum perimeter region average fiber density located in said insertion end region is from about 110% to about 130% of said minimum perimeter region average fiber density located in said center region.
- Claim 12. (Currently Amended) The tampon according to Claim [[8]] 9 wherein said maximum perimeter region comprises a cotton and rayon blend having a first average fiber density and said minimum perimeter region comprises a cotton and rayon blend having a second average fiber density which is less than said first average fiber density.
- Claim 13. (Currently Amended) The tampon according to Claim 1 ~~further comprising an applicator~~ wherein said tampon is housed in ~~said~~ an applicator.
- Claim 14. (Currently Amended) The tampon according to Claim 1 ~~further comprising an applicator~~ wherein said tampon is housed in an applicator, wherein said applicator is at least partially translucent, allowing at least a portion of said tampon to be visible to a user prior to use.
- Claim 15. (Currently Amended) The tampon according to Claim 1 ~~further comprising an applicator~~ wherein said tampon is housed in ~~said~~ an applicator; wherein said applicator comprises an insertion end region comprising flexible material;

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and wherein at least a portion of said flexible material conforms to at least a portion of said substantially serpentine outer surface of said tampon, enabling a user to observe a profile of at least a portion of said substantially serpentine outer surface of said tampon through said flexible material prior to expulsion of said tampon from said applicator.

Claim 16. (Currently Amended) The tampon according to Claim 1 ~~further comprising a wrapper~~ wherein said tampon is enclosed within ~~wrapper is a~~ tightly conforming wrapper.

Claim 17. (Original) The tampon according to Claim 1 further comprising texturing on said outer surface of said tampon.